

November 25, 2002

TO: The Honorable Mark R. Warner, Governor of Virginia

and

Members of the Virginia General Assembly

The report contained herein is pursuant to House Bill 1178, agreed to by the 2000 General Assembly. This report constitutes the response of the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia on: 1) the number and geographic availability of parent education seminars, 2) the actual cost of providing such seminars as reported by the participating programs, and 3) any feedback from judges regarding the effect of mandating seminar participation by court order. This report is submitted for your review and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert N. Baldwin
Executive Secretary

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia was requested by the 2000 General Assembly, pursuant to House Bill 1178, to develop and disseminate information to the 2003 General Assembly regarding: 1) the number and geographic availability of parent education seminars, 2) the actual cost of providing such seminars as reported by the participating programs, and 3) any feedback from judges regarding the effect of mandating seminar participation by court order. House Bill 1178 had a one-year delayed enactment period with the provisions of the bill taking effect July 1, 2001.

A. Background

Our society has experienced fundamental changes in the institution of marriage over the past half-century. Today, over half of all marriages and non-marital partnerships end in divorce or separation, approximately a quarter of all children are born outside of marriage, and the percentage of families headed by a single parent has more than tripled since 1960. The transformation of family structures and consequent social impacts have created a need for proactive strategies to assist divorcing and separating families. This reflects a growing awareness by academics, mental health professionals, community service providers and court personnel that divorce and separation can have devastating effects on children. The most rapidly developing intervention has been the institution of mandatory education programs for divorcing or separating parents. The goal of these programs is to help parents learn new skills in how to keep children out of the middle of conflicts between parents, how to improve communication with the co-parent, and how to collaborate with the co-parent to protect the emotional, legal and economic well-being of their children.

In Virginia, parent education programs have existed for over a decade, but referral to such programs has varied from court to court. House Bill 1178, passed by the 2000 General Assembly, requires that when parties are parents of a child whose custody or visitation is contested, the court shall order the parties to attend educational seminars on the effects of separation or divorce on children, parenting responsibilities, options for conflict resolution and financial responsibilities. Following the passage of HB 1178, the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) developed a list of parent education programs with information provided from the courts and placed it on the Supreme Court of Virginia homepage. Several training sessions were held to inform judges about the new parent education mandate. Parent education programs were requested to give parents attending the seminar an exit survey developed by the Office of the Executive Secretary in order to capture information on parent satisfaction with the course. In the Fall of 2002, a survey was sent to the parent education providers to determine the cost of conducting such seminars. A separate survey was sent to all Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Judges and Circuit Court Judges to determine their impressions of the effect of the parent education mandate.

B. Evaluations

1. Parent Feedback

From July 1, 2001 – October 31, 2002, approximately 5,000 survey responses were submitted by parents following the parent education seminar. Feedback from the parents regarding the seminar is very positive with over 93% of parents agreeing that the course taught them how to reduce parental conflict and 92% agreeing that the course taught them parenting skills and co-parenting techniques. For complete survey results, see Appendix E.

2. Number and Geographical Availability

There are 105 parent education programs around the Commonwealth. Each Circuit in Virginia has a number of parent education providers serving that area. Where programs have indicated that they serve only particular counties or cities within a Circuit, that information has been noted on the list of Parent Education Providers (See Appendix D). Anecdotally, there have been some concerns expressed that there is insufficient “coverage” in terms of the availability of parenting courses in the truest sense. This may be due to programs covering only specific cities or counties within a Circuit, requiring parents to travel some distance in certain situations. In addition, programs may offer seminars infrequently or at times that are inconvenient for parents, thereby limiting accessibility. A complete list of programs divided by judicial regions and identifying the number of participants served may be found in Appendix F.

3. Cost of Providing Parent Education Seminars

Out of a total of 105 parent education programs, 90 (86%) returned the OES survey requesting information on the cost of providing such seminars. The 90 programs together offered 1,362 courses statewide between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002. 13,309 parents attended the parent education course in this time frame. The average annual budget attributed to the parent education programs offered between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002 is \$7,748. The average fee participants were charged is \$35. The average cost per participant is \$79. Sixty-five programs offered sliding scale fees and/or free classes in case of need. The fee was reduced or waived for 1,477 (11%) of participants. The parent education programs received \$365,007 in fees from participants between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002. Sixty programs (67%) had more expenses than the fees received. Thus, the data received indicates that most programs lost money over the last year in offering the parent education program, unless the program was offered through a governmental entity, college, or other institution that could support the program as part of its other services. Only 8 programs have decided to discontinue the seminar in the future.

4. Feedback from Judges

A total of 138 (53%) judges responded to a survey provided by OES regarding their impressions of the impact of the parent education mandate. Thirty-six percent of judges found that the seminar had no noticeable effects. Thirty-three percent of judges found that parents are more focused on child(ren)’s needs. Twenty-eight percent found that there is an increase in

mediated agreements and there is less parental hostility in court. Sixty-nine percent of judges believe that the parent education mandate should continue as it currently exists. The most frequent comment by judges with regard to suggestions for revisions/modifications of the parent education mandate is that the Courts should retain discretion as to whether to refer parties to the parent education seminar. See Appendix I for a complete listing of the judges' survey responses and comments.

PREFACE

The 2000 Session of the General Assembly of Virginia, pursuant to House Bill 1178, requested the Office of the Executive Secretary to report to the General Assembly by January 1, 2003, on: 1) the number and geographical availability of parent education seminars, 2) the actual cost of providing such seminars as reported by the participating programs, and 3) any feedback from judges regarding the effect of mandating seminar participation by court order. House Bill 1178 had a one-year delayed enactment period with the provisions of the bill taking effect July 1, 2001.

The following report is a compilation of the information received from surveys of parent education providers, judges, and program participants. The appendices include a copy of the survey instruments used to gather data and reports detailing the information obtained.

EVALUATION OF PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

I. Introduction

Our society has experienced fundamental changes in the institution of marriage over the past half-century, with over half of all marriages and non-marital relationships ending in divorce or separation. Since the 1990's, there has been tremendous growth in the propensity of many courts to adopt proactive strategies to assist divorcing and separating (both married and unmarried) families. This reflects a growing awareness by academics, mental health professionals, community service providers and court personnel that divorce and separation can have devastating effects on children. The most rapidly developing intervention has been the institution of mandatory education programs for divorcing or separating parents. The goal of these programs is to increase parental awareness of the potential harmful effects of family breakup on the children as well as to provide skills to parents to aid in communication, parenting and conflict resolution. A 1997 national survey found that nearly half of all the counties in the United States offer parent education programs and that more than half a dozen states have statewide mandatory programming.

II. History

In Virginia, parent education programs have existed for over a decade. Referral to such programs has varied from court to court. In 1999, the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) developed a Model Parent Education Curriculum pursuant to House Joint Resolution 591. A Committee, including a diverse representation of individuals involved in custody proceedings as well as parent education seminar providers, judges, and experts in child development, assisted in the development of the Curriculum. The Curriculum provides a comprehensive overview of the goals of the parent education course as well as an outline of content areas to be covered in parent education programs. The Curriculum was disseminated to all juvenile and circuit court judges as well as Commissioners in Chancery in the fall of 1999.

In 2000, the General Assembly passed House Bill 1178, which requires that, when parties are parents of a child whose custody or visitation is contested, the court shall order the parties, at the time of the initial court appearance, to attend educational seminars on the effects of separation or divorce on children, parenting responsibilities, options for conflict resolution, and financial responsibilities. (See Appendix A.) The fee charged a party for participation in such a program should be based on the party's ability to pay; however, no fee in excess of fifty dollars may be charged. The bill had a one-year delayed enactment period to allow for the development of parent education programs across the state that conform to the Model Parent Education Curriculum.

Following the passage of HB 1178, the Office of the Executive Secretary sent a letter to all juvenile and domestic relations district court and circuit court judges notifying them of the amendments to § 16.1-278.15 and 20-103 of the *Code of Virginia*. Judges were also asked to complete a brief survey to provide OES with the names of the parent education programs the

courts were aware of in the Commonwealth to assist with the development of a comprehensive list of parent education programs. The Parent Education Network (PEN), a private organization, was also independently formed to serve as a resource for professional training and continuing education of parent educators. PEN's objective was to assist in the development and implementation of parent education programs and to serve as a forum for the exchange of information in the field of parent education.

Several training programs were conducted for judges in 2000 and 2001 at conferences and regional meetings to explain the new parent education referral requirement. A new Parent Education Order of Referral Form was created to facilitate the referral of parties to the program in a consistent manner. (See Appendix B.) Judges began seeking the assistance of OES in determining which parent education provider to use. To assist courts in the selection process, a Self-Evaluation Form was developed by the Parent Education Network for educators to complete and submit to courts that they were interested in serving. (See Appendix C.) The information on the Form could assist educators in demonstrating to judges their qualifications, experience, and program structure.

OES sent a mailing to all identified parent education programs seeking accurate contact information and a listing of the courts the programs would serve. A Directory of Parent Education programs was developed and placed on the Supreme Court of Virginia's homepage (www.courts.state.va.us). A complete list of Parent Education Programs by Circuit may be found in Appendix D. OES clearly noted on the homepage that the list did not represent a certification as to the quality of the programs. It was the responsibility of those seeking a program to learn more about the program's quality and content.

III. Evaluations

A. Parent Exit Survey

In order to assess parent satisfaction with the parent education course, OES developed an exit survey for programs to give to parents for completion at the conclusion of the course. The questions on the survey are based on the content requirements described in the Model Parent Education Curriculum. The primary focus of the questions is to determine whether the learning objectives of the course as set forth in the Model Curriculum were met.

The programs were asked to submit to OES quarterly reports summarizing the results of the exit surveys. From July 1, 2001 – October 31, 2002, approximately 5,000 survey responses were submitted. Of the parents responding:

- 93% agreed that the course assisted them in understanding how to reduce parental conflict.
- 84% agreed that the course improved their communication skills.
- 92% agreed that the course taught parenting skills and co-parenting techniques.
- 94% agreed that the course helped them understand the emotions and behaviors that are often present in parental separation.

- 93% agreed that the course provided them with information that would increase their understanding of their child's emotional needs during the divorce/separation.
- 92% agreed that the course provided them with ways to further their child's adjustment to the separation.
- 95% agreed that the course increased their awareness of the effects of separation and divorce on children.
- 95% agreed that the course taught them how and why conflict between parents creates stress for children and encouraged accountability for creating peace instead of stress and conflict.

Furthermore, the respondents agreed that:

- the course taught skills on how to keep children out of the middle of parental conflict (94%)
- the course increased their understanding of why children need and want a healthy and meaningful relationship with both of their parents and offered ideas on how to successfully share in the parenting of their children (94%)
- the course presented information that would help them recognize when a child is experiencing emotional problems, how and where to seek help, support and access to community resources (92%)
- the course provided them with information on community resources available to them (90%)
- the course instructed them on how to enhance the safety, stability, consistency and security of the child's environment (91%)
- the course increased their understanding of the importance of providing emotional support to the children (94%)
- the course increased their understanding of the importance of providing financial support to the children (7%)

The survey results may be found in Appendix E. In short, the feedback from parents has been very positive. Many parents chose to provide written comments as well on their survey. Some consistent themes in the comments include:

- The course was very helpful and they learned a great deal.
- The course should be longer.
- The course should be offered earlier in the separation/divorce process.
- The class size should be smaller to allow for greater discussion and personal experiences to be shared.
- The course reaffirmed that kids come first and that parents should work on communication issues.

A handful of parents did state that the course should not be mandatory and that it was not helpful at all. Some noted that the class was too expensive and should not have had a cost at all. Others said the class was too long. A few expressed that, while the course helps parents identify anger and behavioral problems, it does not assist with unique situations or in telling parents how

to cope when the other parent is non-cooperative and/or places children in an unsafe environment.

B. Number and Geographical Availability

There are 105 parent education programs around the Commonwealth. A complete listing of programs divided by judicial circuit as well as a map of Virginia outlining the Circuits may be found in Appendix D. A complete list of programs divided by judicial regions and identifying the number of participants served may be found in Appendix F. Where programs have indicated that they serve only particular counties or cities within a circuit, that information has been noted. Each circuit in the Commonwealth has a number of parent education providers listed as serving that area. Anecdotally, however, there have been some concerns expressed over the last year that there is not sufficient “coverage” in terms of the availability of parenting courses in the truest sense. For instance, some programs cover only specific counties and cities. As a result, parents may have to travel a distance in some parts of the state in order to attend a course. Furthermore, some programs offer classes infrequently or at times that are inconvenient to parents, thereby limiting accessibility. In addition, often if programs do not have a sufficient number of parents registered for a class, the class is cancelled thereby affecting the parents’ ability to meet the court order requiring attendance at the class.

C. Cost of Providing Parent Education Seminars

Out of a total of 105 parent education programs, 90 (86%) returned the OES survey (Appendix G) requesting information on the cost of providing such seminars. The following is a summary of the findings of the survey. See Appendix H for a complete overview of the providers’ responses. Eight programs that began in July 2001 no longer exist. Reasons given included having received no referrals, the program not being cost effective, time constraints of the instructor, and sufficient programs being offered by other providers in the same area.

The Model Parent Education Curriculum developed by OES pursuant to House Joint Resolution 591 is followed by 77 programs (86%). Other approaches to the curriculum involve 28 organizations creating their own program, 56 purchasing an existing program, and 15 receiving training and materials from a Virginia Parent Education provider.

The courses have been offered on average 29 months or 2.4 years. Fifty-two programs are a year old or less. Seventeen programs have been offered five or more years. The oldest program, Peaceful Pathways, has been offered 20 years. The three newest programs, Northern Virginia Community College – Loudon Campus, Healthy Living Solutions, and Catholic Charities of Hampton Roads are 1 month old. The 90 programs together offered 1,362 courses statewide between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002.

The average annual budget attributable to the parent education programs offered between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002 is \$7,748. The greater the number of classes held and the larger the number of participants served, the larger the annual budget. When considered on a per-class basis, the average cost of space for each class is \$62. The average cost of materials per class is

\$150. The average cost of instruction per class is \$209. The average cost of administration per class is \$118.

Between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002, 13,309 parents attended the parent education seminar. The average fee participants were charged is \$35. Sixty-five programs offered sliding scale fees and/or free classes in case of need. The fee was waived or reduced between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002 for 1,477 (11%) participants. The average cost per participant is \$79. Where fees were waived or reduced, programs offset costs by the governmental or private agency absorbing the costs, by grants and donations, by fees charged to other participants, and by reducing the number of classes offered or discontinuing classes. Twelve programs receive grant funding. Sources of grants include the United Way, Substance Abuse Prevention Funds, the Department of Social Services Access and Visitation Grant, and other local foundations.

The parent education programs received \$365,007 in fees from participants between July 1, 2001 – June 30, 2002. Sixty programs (67%) had more expenses than the fees received. Seven of these 60 programs incurred expenses, but did not charge any fees as the program is offered as an ordinary part of the governmental agency or institution's services. For example, these programs include a Community Services Board, Court Service Unit, Community College, Community Mediation Center, and a Guidance Clinic. Four programs broke even, and another 5 programs reported zero expenses and zero fees (three had no classes and 2 held classes but were unwilling to share financial figures). Seventeen programs had a profit. Eight programs received no referrals and, therefore, did not submit a survey. These 8 programs intend, however, to continue offering their services. Seven programs did not respond to our repeated requests for a completed survey, and 4 providers are combined with another associated provider for purposes of reporting results in their survey. Fourteen programs offer classes in other languages including: sign language for hearing impaired, Spanish, Japanese, Korean, and Portuguese.

In short, the fiscal information from the programs seems to indicate that most programs have lost money over the last year in offering the parent education program, unless the program was offered through a governmental entity, college, or other institution that could support the program as part of its other services. Some programs could not afford to offer the course if only a few parents registered and as a result offered fewer classes or have elected to discontinue offering the course. As noted above, the average cost per participant is \$79. If programs were to charge a fee higher than \$50 per person, feedback from parents and from judges suggests that it may be an undue hardship on parents. In addition to the cost of the course, many parents incurred childcare and travel expenses as well as time lost from work. Although most programs did not break even or make a profit last year, only 8 programs have decided to discontinue the seminar in the future.

D. Feedback from Judges

A survey was sent to all juvenile and domestic relations district court judges and circuit court judges for feedback on the parent education program. One hundred thirty-eight judges (53%) responded to the survey. Thirty percent of judges responding refer parents to parent education classes in all cases involving custody, visitation and divorce/separation and 67% refer only contested cases involving custody, visitation and divorce/separation. Responding judges note that the impact of the parent education course is:

1. no noticeable effects (36%)
2. parents are more focused on children's needs (33%)
3. an increase in mediated agreements and less parental hostility in court (28%)

In terms of the benefits of the seminar, 88% of judges responding note primarily that it is of value to the children and parents.

If judges are not referring parents to the parent education seminar, it is because of the lack of classes available in the area, parties' inability to pay or lack of transportation. The number of judges waiving participation for good cause is not exactly known, but less than 20 responses (14%) were received for the question regarding reasons for not referring parties to the seminar. Sixty-nine percent of judges responding believe the parent education mandate should continue as it currently exists. Fifteen percent think it should continue with modifications and 16% believe that it should not continue. **The most frequent comment by judges with regard to suggestions for revisions or modifications of the parent education mandate is that the Courts should retain discretion as to whether to refer parties to the parent education seminar.** See Appendix I for a complete listing of the judges' survey responses and comments. In short, the judges responding are generally favorable to the parent education course, but would prefer to retain some discretion with regard to the referral of appropriate cases (parties) to the seminar.

IV. Miscellaneous Issues Raised by Study

This study of parent education programs raises a number of incidental issues, which are discussed below. These issues may be addressed by the General Assembly, if deemed appropriate.

A. Timing of Referral

Pursuant to House Bill 1178, the amended language of *Virginia Code* § 16.1-278.15 states that, "When the parties are parents of a child whose custody or visitation is contested, the court shall order the parties, **at the time of the parties' initial court appearance**, to attend educational seminars on...parenting responsibilities..." The amended language in *Virginia Code* § 20-103 is silent on the issue of timing of referral of parties to attend educational seminars. At the juvenile and domestic relations district court level, where referral is specified as occurring at the time of the initial court appearance, it is challenging for courts to process referral to mediation *and* referral to parent education. Many juvenile and domestic relations district courts use mediation prior to the initial court appearance. In these situations, parties ideally should be referred to parent education seminars prior to mediation. Research indicates that participation in parent education prior to participation in mediation makes the parties more focused on the best interests of their child and better able to develop a collaborative parenting plan during the mediation. It has been recommended to judges over the last year that, whenever possible, parties should be referred to parent education and mediation at approximately the same time and that parties should be encouraged to attend the parent education seminar *prior* to participating in mediation.

If parties are required to make an initial court appearance before referral to mediation can be made in order to fulfill the parent education mandate, then mediation will lose the advantage of saving parties time and expense. Parties will also become more adversarial and entrenched in their positions the longer they have to wait before they are referred to mediation. If juvenile and domestic relations district courts enjoyed the same flexibility as the circuit courts in determining the appropriate timing of referral of parties to the parenting seminar, the courts can continue to use mediation and parent education programs in a manner that best serves the parties. Repeal of the language: “at the time of the parties’ initial court appearance” would accomplish this result.

B. Who can be Referred?

Some judges have requested an explanation of the reach of amendments to *Virginia Code* § 16.1-278.15. Specifically, should the parent education requirement be read to encompass a party to contested custody and visitation cases who is not a parent, such as a grandparent who may be the legal guardian or legal custodian of the child. In response to such inquiries, the Department of Legal Research at the Office of the Executive Secretary has noted that, as the intent of the legislation is educational in nature, it seems appropriate to read the provisions as applicable to a non-parent party in a contested custody proceeding who is, or who is seeking to be, the guardian, legal custodian or person who stands in loco parentis to that child. The parallel change made to § 20-103 does not use the word “parent,” but instead refers to “parties with a minor child or children.” If this reference applies to a non-party parent, it would be a curious result if the requirement would not apply to a grandparent in a custody proceeding in juvenile and domestic relations district court, but would apply to that party should the same legal issue be determined on appeal in circuit court. Judges have been informed over the last year that they retain the discretion to direct a party to a custody proceeding to attend the parent education program.

C. What is a Contested Case?

The language of *Virginia Code* § 16.1-278.15 states that “When the parties are parents of a child whose custody or visitation **is contested**, the court shall order the parties...to attend educational seminars on...parenting responsibilities...” A question often raised by courts is: How is contested defined? Parties who attend mediation and reach an agreement arguably no longer have a contested case. Participation in the parent education seminar is still helpful, however. (As discussed above, ideally participation in the parent education seminar should occur *prior* to the mediation and will lead to a more fruitful mediation process.) There are also situations in which the parties come to court with an amicable resolution in mind. These parties also arguably do not have a contested case, yet may benefit from participation in a parent education seminar. Courts have difficulty distinguishing between a contested and uncontested case at the time of filing. It has been suggested to judges over the past year that they err on the side of referring all parties involved in a seemingly contested custody and visitation matter to the parent education seminar unless it is absolutely clear that there is no contest between the parties.

D. Quality Control

Currently, there is no oversight or quality control in place for parent education programs. This lack of oversight may have a negative effect on the quality and consistency of the programs offered. Certification and/or oversight of trainers and program curricula may give judges more confidence in referring parties to a parenting education seminar. Programs may benefit from a centralized resource in the event they need technical assistance or subject matter advice. Areas of the state lacking in a sufficient number of programs may also value assistance in facilitating the creation of new programs.

APPENDIX A

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY – 2000 SESSION

CHAPTER 586

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 16.1-278.15 and 20-103 of the Code of Virginia, relating to custody, visitation and support.

[H 1178]

Approved April 7, 2000

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 16.1-278.15 and 20-103 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 16.1-278.15. Custody or visitation, child or spousal support generally.

A. In cases involving the custody, visitation or support of a child pursuant to subdivision A 3 of § 16.1-241, the court may make any order of disposition to protect the welfare of the child and family as may be made by the circuit court. *When the parties are parents of a child whose custody or visitation is contested, the court shall order the parties, at the time of the parties' initial court appearance, to attend educational seminars or other like programs conducted by a qualified person or organization approved by the court, on the effects of separation or divorce on children, parenting responsibilities, options for conflict resolution, and financial responsibilities. The fee charged a party for participation in such program shall be based on the party's ability to pay; however, no fee in excess of fifty dollars may be charged. The court may grant an exemption from attendance of such program for good cause shown. Other than statements or admissions by a party admitting criminal activity or child abuse or neglect, no statement or admission by a party in such seminar or program shall be admissible into evidence in any subsequent proceeding.*

If support is ordered for a child, the order shall also provide that support will continue to be paid for a child over the age of eighteen who is (i) a full-time high school student, (ii) not self-supporting, and (iii) living in the home of the parent seeking or receiving child support, until the child reaches the age of nineteen or graduates from high school, whichever occurs first. The court may also order the continuation of support for any child over the age of eighteen who is (i) severely and permanently mentally or physically disabled, (ii) unable to live independently and support himself, and (iii) resides in the home of the parent seeking or receiving child support.

B. In any case involving the custody or visitation of a child, the court may award custody upon petition to any party with a legitimate interest therein, including, but not limited to, grandparents, stepparents, former stepparents, blood relatives and family members. The term "legitimate interest" shall be broadly construed to accommodate the best interest of the child. The authority of the juvenile court to consider a petition involving the custody of a child shall not be proscribed or limited where the custody of the child has previously been awarded to a local board of social services.

C. In any determination of support obligation under this section, the support obligation as it becomes due and unpaid creates a judgment by operation of law. Such judgment becomes a lien against real estate only when docketed in the county or city where such real estate is located. Nothing herein shall be construed to alter or amend the process of attachment of any lien on personal property.

D. In cases involving charges for desertion, abandonment or failure to provide support by any person in violation of law, disposition shall be made in accordance with Chapter 5 (§ 20-61 et seq.) of Title 20.

E. In cases involving a spouse who seeks spousal support after having separated from his spouse, the court may enter any appropriate order to protect the welfare of the spouse seeking support.

F. In any case or proceeding involving the custody or visitation of a child, the court shall consider the best interest of the child, including the considerations for determining custody and visitation set forth in Chapter 6.1 (§ 20-124.1 et seq.) of Title 20.

§ 20-103. Court may make orders pending suit for divorce, custody or visitation, etc.

A. In suits for divorce, annulment and separate maintenance, and in proceedings arising under subdivision A 3 or subsection L of § 16.1-241, the court having jurisdiction of the matter may, at any time pending a suit pursuant to this chapter, in the discretion of such court, make any order that may be proper (i) to compel a spouse to pay any sums necessary for the maintenance and support of the petitioning spouse, including an order that the other spouse provide health care coverage for the petitioning spouse, unless it is shown that such coverage cannot be obtained, (ii) to enable such spouse to carry on the suit, (iii) to prevent either spouse from imposing any restraint on the personal liberty of the other spouse, (iv) to provide for the custody and maintenance of the minor children of the parties, including an order that either party provide health care coverage for the children, (v) to provide support, calculated in accordance with § 20-108.2, for any child of the parties to whom a duty of support is owed and to continue to support any child over the age of eighteen who meets the requirements set forth in subsection C of § 20-124.2, (vi) for the exclusive use and possession of the family residence during the pendency of the suit, (vii) to preserve the estate of either spouse, so that it be forthcoming to meet any decree which may be made in the suit, or (viii) to compel either spouse to give security to abide such decree.

In addition to the authority hereinabove, the court ~~may~~ *shall* order parties with a minor child or children *whose custody or visitation is contested* to attend educational seminars ~~and~~ *or* other like programs conducted by a qualified person or organization approved by the court, on the effects of the separation or divorce on minor children, parenting responsibilities, options for conflict resolution, and financial responsibilities, ~~provided that~~. *The fee charged a party for participation in such a program shall be based on the party's ability to pay; however, no fee in excess of fifty dollars may be charged for participation in any such program. The court may grant an exemption from attendance of such program for good cause shown. Other than statements or admissions by a party admitting criminal activity or child abuse or neglect, no statement or admission by a*

party in such seminar or program shall be admissible into evidence in any subsequent proceeding.

B. In addition to the terms provided in subsection A, upon a showing by a party of reasonable apprehension of physical harm to that party by such party's family or household member as that term is defined in § 16.1-228, and consistent with rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, the court may enter an order excluding that party's family or household member from the jointly owned or jointly rented family dwelling. In any case where an order is entered under this paragraph, pursuant to an ex parte hearing, the order shall not exclude a family or household member from the family dwelling for a period in excess of fifteen days from the date the order is served, in person, upon the person so excluded. The order may provide for an extension of time beyond the fifteen days, to become effective automatically. The person served may at any time file a written motion in the clerk's office requesting a hearing to dissolve or modify the order. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the court from extending an order entered under this subsection for such longer period of time as is deemed appropriate, after a hearing on notice to the parties.

C. In cases other than those for divorce in which a custody or visitation arrangement for a minor child is sought, the court may enter an order providing for custody, visitation or maintenance pending the suit as provided in subsection A. The order shall be directed to either parent or any person with a legitimate interest who is a party to the suit.

D. Orders entered pursuant to this section which provide for custody or visitation arrangements pending the suit shall be made in accordance with the standards set out in Chapter 6.1 (§ 20-124.1 et seq.) of Title 20. Orders entered pursuant to subsection B shall be certified by the clerk and forwarded as soon as possible to the local police department or sheriff's office which shall, on the date of receipt, enter the name of the person subject to the order and other appropriate information required by the Department of State Police into the Virginia crime information network system established and maintained by the Department of State Police pursuant to Chapter 2 (§ 52-12 et seq.) of Title 52. If the order is later dissolved or modified, a copy of the dissolution or modification shall also be certified, forwarded and entered in the system as described above.

E. An order entered pursuant to this section shall have no presumptive effect and shall not be determinative when adjudicating the underlying cause.

2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on July 1, 2001.

3. That the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia is requested to report to the General Assembly by January 1, 2003, on the provisions of this act regarding educational seminars for parents on the effects of separation or divorce on children, parenting responsibilities, options for conflict resolution and financial responsibilities throughout the Commonwealth; including (i) the number and geographical availability of such seminars, (ii) the actual cost of providing such seminars as reported by the participating programs, and (iii) any feedback received from judges regarding the effect of mandating seminar participation by court order.

4. That the provisions of this act shall expire on July 1, 2003, unless reenacted by the General Assembly.

APPENDIX B

ORDER OF REFERRAL TO PARENT EDUCATION SEMINAR

Case No.:

Commonwealth of Virginia Va. Code §§ 16.1-278.15, 20-103

..... ☐ Circuit Court
..... ☐ Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

..... V.

In re:
JUVENILE DATE OF BIRTH

☐ and ,
parents of a child whose custody or visitation is contested, are ordered to attend and complete an
educational seminar or other like program conducted by a qualified person or organization approved
by the Court, on the effects of separation or divorce on minor children, parenting responsibilities,
options for conflict resolution, and financial responsibilities by
DATE

Based on a parent's ability to pay, each parent shall be responsible for paying a fee of no more than
\$50.00 (fifty dollars) for the seminar. The fee is payable to the program.

Other than statements or admissions by a party admitting criminal activity or child abuse or neglect,
no statement by a party in such seminar or program shall be admissible into evidence in any
subsequent proceedings.

A list of parent education programs available in this community with contact information is
provided.

☐ and

are exempt from attendance at the parent education seminar for good cause shown as follows:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

.....
DATE

.....
JUDGE

APPENDIX C

Parent Education Program Self Evaluation

*Developed from recommendations of the Model Parent Education Curriculum Committee
as presented in House Document 26 (2000)*

Organization name _____	Date: _____
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Phone (____) _____	
Contact person _____	
E-mail _____	Web site _____
Name of program _____	

FACILITIES

- ☐ accessible through public transportation
- ☐ ample off street parking
- ☐ handicap access
- ☐ child care available on site
- ☐ on duty security
- ☐ other sites where your program is conducted:

STAFF

- ☐ pre-class intake to determine special needs
- ☐ one person ☐ co-trainers ☐ total number of trainers _____
- Trainer qualifications: ☐ undergraduate degree: _____
- ☐ post grad. degree ☐ no education requirement ☐ equivalent life experience

PROGRAM DETAILS

- Type** ☐ national program ☐ curriculum developed by our agency ☐ combination
- Localities Served** _____
- Cost** ☐ under \$35 per person ☐ \$35-\$50 ☐ sliding scale ☐ scholarships available
- Class size** ☐ limited to 10 ☐ limited to 20 ☐ limited to 30 ☐ no limit
- Sessions** ☐ one session ☐ multiple sessions option: _____
- ☐ weekdays ☐ week nights ☐ weekends ☐ weekly ☐ monthly ☐ other _____
- ☐ less than 2 hours ☐ 2- 4 hours ☐ 5 - 6 hours ☐ more than 6 hours
- Presentation** ☐ lecture ☐ discussion ☐ video ☐ role-play ☐ written hand outs
- ☐ visual and auditory teaching tools Manual: ☐ included ☐ additional charge
- ☐ other _____
- Special needs** ☐ foreign language interpreters ☐ sign language interpreters

PROGRAM CONTENT

[Check all which are included in your program]

DISPUTE RESOLUTION ALTERNATIVES

- ☐ Understanding the effect of parental conflict on their children
- ☐ How to reduce parental conflict
- ☐ What triggers anger or conflict
- ☐ Techniques in problem solving and negotiation

SKILLS

- ☐ Increase parents' communication skills
- ☐ Parenting skills and co-parenting techniques to increase the effectiveness of parenting from two homes
- ☐ Skills to identify and meet developmental needs of their children
- ☐ Skills on how to keep children out of the middle

EMOTIONAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- ☐ Emotional, cognitive and behavioral components of parental separation
- ☐ Information that will help parents recognize when a child is experiencing emotional problems
- ☐ Increase parents' understanding of the importance of providing emotional and financial support to children.

PSYCHOLOGICAL IDENTITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

- ☐ Increase parents' understanding of why children need and want a healthy, meaningful relationship with both of their parents and offer ideas on how to successfully share in the parenting of their children
- ☐ Increase awareness of parental roles and their impact on child development
- ☐ Encouragement of positive involvement of both parents in the lives of their children
- ☐ Development of a personal action plan related to their co-parenting.
- ☐ How parents recognize the signs of children at risk
- ☐ Enhance the safety, stability, consistency, and security of the child's environment

EXTENDED FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

- ☐ Data on what is normal in their past, present, and future situation including changes in family structure such as remarriage, blended families, step and half siblings
- ☐ Validation of the many things parents have already done or are doing that support children during the divorce / separation process
- ☐ Make parents aware where to seek professional help, support, and where they can access community resources available to them

LEGAL INFORMATION

- ☐ Mediation alternatives
- ☐ When and what court may have jurisdiction
- ☐ Grounds for divorce
- ☐ Types of divorce
- ☐ Equitable distribution of marital property
- ☐ Paternity establishment
- ☐ Options for parenting arrangements
- ☐ Persons with a legitimate interest
- ☐ Factors a judge must consider in awarding custody or visitation
- ☐ When and by whom child support may be awarded
- ☐ How child support is calculated
- ☐ Factors to rebut the presumption of child support calculated
- ☐ Requirements for notification of relocation
- ☐ Rights of access to child's records
- ☐ Tax consequences
- ☐ Enforcement of a court order
- ☐ Penalties for violation of a court order
- ☐ Social services available

COMPLETION AND FOLLOW UP

Does your program conduct an exit survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No

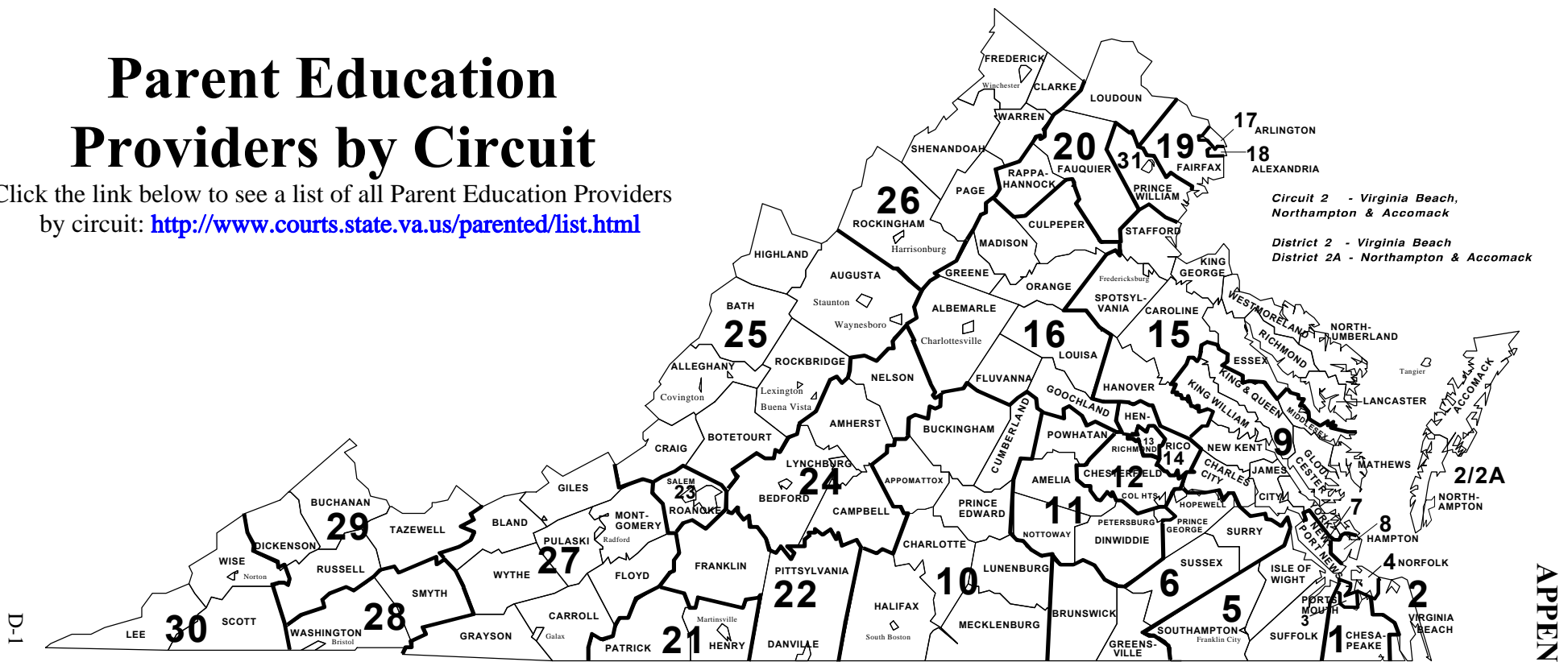
Do you award certificates of completion? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you conduct post follow up calls or surveys? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If so, when? _____

Other related programs offered by this organization:

Parent Education Providers by Circuit

Click the link below to see a list of all Parent Education Providers
by circuit: <http://www.courts.state.va.us/parented/list.html>



Judicial Circuit	No. Providers	Page Number
1	13	D-2
2	14	D-4
3	11	D-6
4	12	D-8
5	8	D-10
6	4	D-12
7	9	D-13
8	10	D-15
9	14	D-17
10	11	D-19

Judicial Circuit	No. Providers	Page Number
11	9	D-21
12	9	D-23
13	8	D-25
14	9	D-27
15	15	D-29
16	14	D-31
17	3	D-33
18	5	D-34
19	8	D-35
20	8	D-37

Judicial Circuit	No. Providers	Page Number
21	5	D-39
22	6	D-40
23	5	D-41
24	10	D-42
25	9	D-44
26	9	D-46
27	6	D-48
28	3	D-49
29	4	D-50
30	6	D-51
31	8	D-52

APPENDIX E

Parent Education Exit Survey July 1, 2002 – October 31, 2002

According to the providers' responses, approximately 5,000 parents or 38% who attended the courses responded to a survey following the conclusion of the parent education course.

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Did this course assist you in understanding how to reduce parental conflict?

- Strongly Agree – 1476 (29%)
- Agree – 3188 (64%)
- Strongly Disagree – 29 (1%)
- Disagree – 114 (2%)
- Not Applicable – 198 (4%)

2. Did this course improve your communication skills?

- Strongly Agree – 1025 (21%)
- Agree – 3192 (63%)
- Strongly Disagree – 38 (1%)
- Disagree – 248 (5%)
- Not Applicable – 475 (10%)

3. Did this course teach you parenting skills and co-parenting techniques?

- Strongly Agree – 1471 (29%)
- Agree – 3131 (63%)
- Strongly Disagree – 38 (1%)
- Disagree – 147 (3%)
- Not Applicable – 208 (4%)

4. Did this course help you understand the emotions and behaviors that are often present in parental separation?

- Strongly Agree – 1878 (38%)
- Agree – 2834 (56%)
- Strongly Disagree – 36 (1%)
- Disagree – 79 (2%)
- Not Applicable – 160 (3%)

5. Did this course provide you with information that will increase your understanding of your child's emotional needs during the divorce/separation?

- Strongly Agree – 2189 (44%)
- Agree – 2507 (49%)
- Strongly Disagree – 27 (1%)
- Disagree – 77 (2%)
- Not Applicable – 206 (4%)

6. Did this course provide you with ways to further your child's adjustment to the separation?
- Strongly Agree – 1726 (35%)
 - Agree – 2881 (57%)
 - Strongly Disagree – 28 (1%)
 - Disagree – 96 (2%)
 - Not Applicable – 270 (5%)
7. Did this course increase your awareness of the effects of separation and conflict on children?
- Strongly Agree – 1903 (38%)
 - Agree – 2847 (57%)
 - Strongly Disagree – 24 (0%)
 - Disagree – 77 (2%)
 - Not Applicable – 153 (3%)
8. Did this course teach you how and why conflict between parents creates stress for children and encourage accountability for creating peace instead of stress and conflict?
- Strongly Agree – 1951 (39%)
 - Agree – 2825 (56%)
 - Strongly Disagree – 20 (0%)
 - Disagree – 77 (2%)
 - Not Applicable – 131 (3%)
9. Did this course teach you skills on how to keep children out of the middle of parental conflict?
- Strongly Agree – 1857 (37%)
 - Agree – 2860 (57%)
 - Strongly Disagree – 26 (1%)
 - Disagree – 97 (2%)
 - Not Applicable – 164 (3%)
10. Did this course increase your understanding of why children need and want a healthy and meaningful relationship with both of their parents and offer ideas on how to successfully share in the parenting of their children?
- Strongly Agree – 1625 (33%)
 - Agree – 2943 (61%)
 - Strongly Disagree – 59 (1%)
 - Disagree – 101 (2%)
 - Not Applicable – 171 (3%)

11. Did this course present information that will help you recognize when a child is experiencing emotional problems, how and where to seek professional help, support and access to community resources?

- Strongly Agree – 1460 (30%)
- Agree – 3040 (62%)
- Strongly Disagree – 50 (1%)
- Disagree – 137 (3%)
- Not Applicable – 200 (4%)

12. Did this course provide you with information on community resources available to you?

- Strongly Agree – 1233 (25%)
- Agree – 3165 (65%)
- Strongly Disagree – 55 (1%)
- Disagree – 146 (3%)
- Not Applicable – 278 (6%)

13. Did this course instruct you on how to enhance the safety, stability, consistency and security of the child's environment?

- Strongly Agree – 1392 (29%)
- Agree – 3079 (62%)
- Strongly Disagree – 56 (1%)
- Disagree – 124 (3%)
- Not Applicable – 223 (5%)

14. Did this course increase your understanding of the importance of providing emotional support to the children?

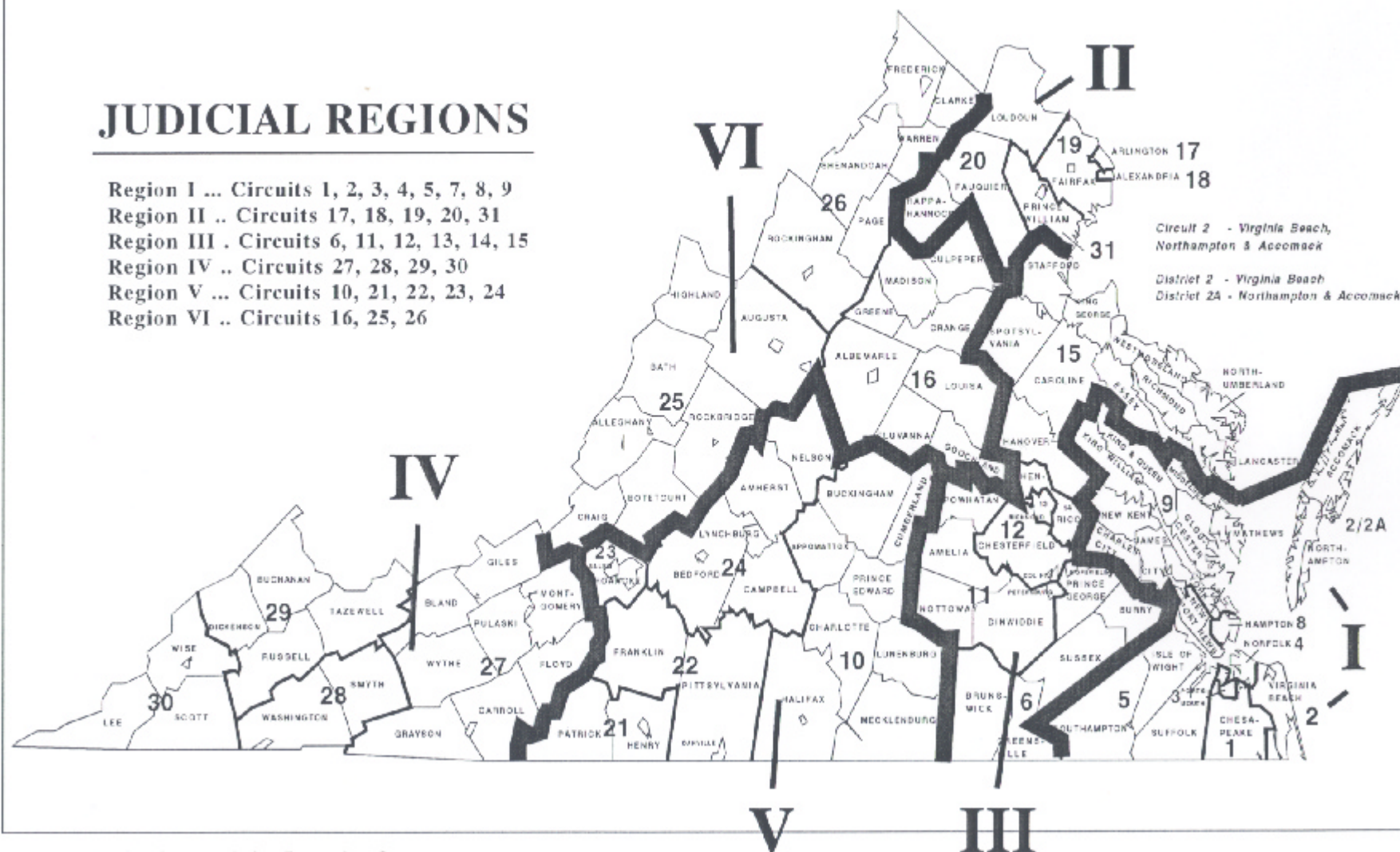
- Strongly Agree – 1545 (37%)
- Agree – 2385 (57%)
- Strongly Disagree – 47 (1%)
- Disagree – 58 (1%)
- Not Applicable – 152 (4%)

15. Did this course increase your understanding of the importance of providing financial support to the children?

- Strongly Agree – 976 (24%)
- Agree – 2303 (55%)
- Strongly Disagree – 51 (1%)
- Disagree – 194 (5%)
- Not Applicable – 603 (15%)

JUDICIAL REGIONS

- Region I ... Circuits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9
- Region II .. Circuits 17, 18, 19, 20, 31
- Region III . Circuits 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
- Region IV .. Circuits 27, 28, 29, 30
- Region V ... Circuits 10, 21, 22, 23, 24
- Region VI .. Circuits 16, 25, 26



Prepared in the Office of the Executive Secretary,
Supreme Court of Virginia

Comparison of Areas Served with Number of Class Participants

Provider Name	# Participants	Areas Served
Judicial Region I		Circuits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9
Catholic Charities of Hampton Roads	6	Newport News, Norfolk, Chesapeake and Virginia Beach.
Thomas Nelson Community College	23	Hampton, Newport News, Williamsburg, Poquoson, York County and James City County.
Jewish Family Service of Tidewater, Inc.	191	Virginia Beach, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Norfolk, Newport News, Suffolk and Hampton
Hampton's Healthy Families Partnership	383	Primarily Hampton.
Healthy Living Solutions, Inc.	5	Circuits #1-4.
Chesapeake Volunteers in Youth Services	32	Chesapeake, Virginia Beach, Suffolk, Portsmouth, Norfolk, Hampton and Newport News
Mediation Center of Hampton Roads	300	Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Hampton, Newport News, Suffolk, Portsmouth and Chesapeake.
Broadfield-Janus Associates, Inc.	28	Hampton, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach, Newport News and Chesapeake.
Gilbert Mediation Services	4	Newport News
Mediation Services of Williamsburg	182	James City County, King William, King & Queen, Gloucester, Newport News
DSC Community Mediation Center	271	Portsmouth, Norfolk, Chesapeake, Virginia Beach, Newport News, Hampton and Suffolk.
Fleet and Family Support Centers of Hampton Roads	96	Navy and Marine installations in areas of Newport News, Hampton, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Suffolk, Norfolk, Virginia Beach, York County and Poquoson.
Department of Social Services - Virginia Beach	400	Virginia Beach
Peninsula Mediation Center	92	Newport News, Hampton, York/Poquoson, Williamsburg/James City County.
Paul D. Camp Community College	102	City of Franklin, City of Suffolk, Isle of Wight County and Southampton County.
Peaceful Pathways, Inc.	272	James City County, Williamsburg, New Kent County, York County, Charles City County, all of the Fifth District, and Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail.
Bruder Counseling Center	154	Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Chesapeake, Portsmouth and Out-of-State
Family Services of Tidewater, Inc.	176	Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Portsmouth, and Chesapeake.
Prevention Services of Middle Peninsula-Northern Neck Community Services Board	24	Gloucester, Mathews, Middlesex, King & Queen, King William, Essex, Richmond, Westmoreland, Northumberland, Lancaster Counties
Virginia Cooperative Extension (Eastville)	12	Accomack and Northampton Counties.
Virginia Cooperative Extension (Suffolk)	82	City of Suffolk, City of Franklin, Isle of Wight, and Southampton.

Comparison of Areas Served with Number of Class Participants

Provider Name	# Participants	Areas Served
Virginia Cooperative Extension (King and Queen)	140	King & Queen, King William, Essex, Mathews, Middlesex and Gloucester.
Total for Region I	2,975	
Judicial Region II		Circuits 17, 18, 19, 20, 31
Center for Promoting Family Learning & Involvement (FLI) (Part of Fairfax County Public Schools)	698	Counties of Fairfax, Arlington, Prince William and Loudoun and the City of Alexandria.
Northern Virginia Community College - Loudoun Campus	0	Western Fairfax County (Reston, Herndon, Vienna, McLean, Great Falls, and Western Oakton).
Northern Virginia Family Service	875	Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, and Prince William, and Cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, Fairfax, Manassas and Manassas Park.
Alexandria Court Service Unit	133	Only court-referred from Alexandria Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court.
Alexandria Community Services Board	7	City of Alexandria only.
Lord Fairfax Community College	70	Marshall, Jefferson, Bealeton, Plains, Warrenton, Midland, Hume, Remington, Catlett, Markham, Culpeper, Lignum, Rixeyville, Elkwood, Brandy Stn, Springfield, Clifton, Fredericksburg, Winchester, Amissville, Nokesville
Fairfax County J&DR Court - Family Systems Counseling & Substance Abuse Assessment Unit	89	Fairfax County
Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale Campus	0	Fairfax County.
Northern Virginia Community College - Woodbridge Campus	2	Prince William County, Spotsylvania County, and City of Manassas.
Northern Virginia Community College - Manassas Campus	0	Prince William County, Manassas Park and City of Manassas.
Lifquest Education	42	Warrenton, Fauquier County, Rappahannock County, Madison County, Culpeper County
Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services Board	36	Fauquier, Madison, Orange, Culpeper, Rappahannock, and Warrenton.
Virginia Cooperative Extension (Manassas)	217	Counties of Prince William, Fairfax, Loudoun, Fauquier, the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park.

Comparison of Areas Served with Number of Class Participants

Provider Name	# Participants	Areas Served
The Families in Transition Support Foundation	607	Fauquier, Loudoun, and Rappahannock Counties
Total for Region II	2,776	
Judicial Region III		Circuits 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
Nancy Siford, Inc.	300	Cumberland, Buckingham, Prince Edward, Westmoreland, Richmond County, Northumberland, Lancaster, Essex
Gray Ball and Lee Consultants	6	Circuits #1-2, 4, 6, 8-16, 19-20, 24 and 31.
Rappahannock Mediation Center	86	Fredericksburg, King George, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Orange.
Hanover County Community Services Board	285	Hanover County
Chesterfield Court Service Unit	688	Chesterfield and Colonial Heights
Karen Rice, LCSW	107	Hanover, Henrico, Caroline, Fredericksburg.
Family Lifeline	50	Circuits #9, 12, 13, and 14.
Community Services Board - District 19	107	Cities of Petersburg, Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell and the Counties of Prince George, Dinwiddie, Surry, Sussex and Greenville.
Synergy Group, Ltd.	90	Henrico, Chesterfield, Hanover, Powhatan, Goochland, City of Richmond
Thad A. Robbins	2	Circuits #9, 11, 13 and 14.
J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College	7	Circuits #12, 13, 14, and 16.
Dispute Resolution Center	722	Henrico, Chesterfield, Richmond and Hanover.
Southside Virginia Community College	37	Counties of Charlotte, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Greenville, Halifax, Prince Edward, Buckingham, Cumberland, Nottoway, and the Cities of Emporia and South Boston.
Commonwealth Parenting Center	30	Metropolitan Richmond
Memorial Child Guidance Clinic	62	City of Richmond and surrounding counties.
Total for Region III	2,579	
Judicial Region IV		Circuits 27, 28, 29, 30
Frontier Health	297	Lee, Wise and Scott Counties
Mountain Empire Community College	9	Wise, Scott, Lee, Dickenson Counties and the City of Norton.
The Counseling Center	44	Tazewell, Russell and Buchanan Counties
Wytheville Community College	230	Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wytheville and the City of Galax.
Lonesome Pine Office on Youth	9	Lee, Scott, and Wise Counties and the City of Norton.

Comparison of Areas Served with Number of Class Participants

Provider Name	# Participants	Areas Served
Virginia Highlands Community College - Center for Business & Industry	293	Washington County, western Smyth County, and Bristol.
Mental Health Association of the New River Valley, Inc.	445	Circuit #27.
Virginia Cooperative Extension (Stuart)	81	Patrick, Carroll, Floyd
Virginia Cooperative Extension (Wytheville)	120	Wythe, Smyth, Washington, Bland, Grayson, Buchanan and Tazewell.
Virginia Cooperative Extension (Lebanon)	79	Russell and Dickenson.
Total for Region IV	1,607	
Judicial Region V		Circuits 10, 21, 22, 23, 24
Prevent Child Abuse Roanoke Valley	100	Roanoke City and Roanoke County, Salem, Craig and Botetourt.
Peacemaker	449	Mecklenberg County and Halifax.
Piedmont Community Services - Martinsville and Rocky Mount	438	Martinsville, Henry County and Franklin County.
Patrick Henry Community College	2	Martinsville, Henry County, Stuart, Patrick County, Rocky Mount, southern half of Franklin County.
Community Mediation Center of Danville-Pittsylvania County	68	Danville and Pittsylvania. If ordered by court will serve Henry, Halifax and Portsmouth.
Southside Mediation Center	12	Primarily Charlotte and Lunenburg Counties.
Lutheran Family Services of Virginia, Inc.	19	Bedford City and County
Conflict Resolution Center	77	Cities of Roanoke and Salem and Counties of Roanoke, Botetourt, Montgomery, Bedford and Craig.
Resolution Facilitators	30	Alleghany, Bedford, Botetourt, Craig, Patrick, Pulaski, Roanoke, Roanoke County, Salem.
Couples & Kids/A Counseling Center for Families	106	Lynchburg, Rustburg, Bedford City and County, Amherst, and Campbell.
Central Virginia Community College	137	Campbell, Amherst, Bedford, Appomattox and Lynchburg.
CAPS of the Blue Ridge, Inc.	91	Town of Rocky Mount and the County of Franklin.
Family Services of Roanoke Valley	145	Roanoke, Salem, Vinton, Roanoke County, and Botetourt County
Total for Region V	1,674	

Comparison of Areas Served with Number of Class Participants

Provider Name	# Participants	Areas Served
Judicial Region VI		Circuits 16, 25, 26
Children, Youth & Family Services, Inc.	171	Albemarle, Greene, Fluvanna, Nelson, Louisa, Charlottesville, and Orange.
Community Mediation Center	333	City of Harrisonburg and County of Rockingham.
Winchester Exchange Child-Parent Center	226	Winchester City, Frederick, Warren, Shenandoah, Clark, Page, and some parts of West Virginia.
Rockbridge Area Community Services Board	23	Lexington, Buena Vista and Rockbridge County.
Goochland-Powhatan Community Services	48	Goochland, Powhatan, and surrounding areas.
Safehome Systems, Inc.	2	Alleghany, Bath, Craig, Covington, Highland and parts of Botetourt.
Mediation Center at FOCUS	235	Albemarle, Greene, Louisa, Orange, Madison, Culpeper, and Fluvanna Counties and the City of Charlottesville
Central Shenandoah Valley Office on Youth	146	Staunton, Waynesboro and Augusta.
Virginia Cooperative Extension (Louisa)	89	Louisa, Fluvanna, Albemarle, Green, Nelson and Charlottesville.
Virginia Cooperative Extension (Culpeper)	132	Fauquier, Rappahannock, Madison, Culpeper and Orange.
Virginia Cooperative Extension (Lexington)	5	Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge, and Rockingham.
Virginia Cooperative Extension (New Castle)	288	Craig, Botetourt, Alleghany, Roanoke City and Roanoke County.
Total for Region VI	1,698	

APPENDIX G

Parent Education Providers Survey

For Period

July 1, 2001 – June 30, 2002

1. Please provide the following information:

Provider name: _____

Contact name: _____

Contact address: _____

Contact telephone number: _____

Name of program: _____

2. Please list the specific cities and counties your program serves _____

3. Does your class follow the Model Parent Education Curriculum? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Did you create your own program, purchase an existing program, or receive training and materials from a Virginia Parent Education Provider? _____

5. How long has your class been offered? _____

6. How many times did you offer the parent education class each month during the period of July 1, 2001 – June 30, 2002? (A class is equivalent to the recommended four-hour program outlined in the Model Curriculum and may consist of multiple sessions)

7. What is the total number of classes you offered between July 1, 2001- June 30, 2002?

8. What was your annual budget, which is attributable to the parent education classes offered last year (July 1, 2001 – June 30, 2002)? \$_____

9. What are your expenditures for each class as broken down below?

Cost of space _____

Cost of materials (i.e. Handbooks, pens, overheads, videos) _____

Cost of instruction _____

Cost of administration
(i.e., intake, secretarial, advertising) _____

10. How many participants did you serve between July 1, 2001- June 30, 2002? _____
11. What fee do you charge participants in this class? \$_____
12. Do you offer sliding scale fees and/or free classes in cases of need? ☐ Yes ☐ No
13. How many participants had the fee waived or reduced between July 1, 2001 –June 30, 2002? .

14. If you waived or reduced the fee for participants, how were your costs offset? _____

15. Does your program receive any grant funding? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, what is the source of funds? _____
16. How much did you receive from participants in fees between July 1, 2001 – June 30, 2002?
\$_____
17. Do you offer classes in other languages (hearing impaired or other language)?
☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please list _____
18. Are the judges in the areas you serve referring parties to the parent education class?
☐ Yes ☐ No If you answered “no”, why not?

Thank you for your feedback.

Please mail or fax your response to:

**Department of Dispute Resolution
Office of the Executive Secretary
Supreme Court of Virginia
100 North Ninth Street, Third Floor
Richmond, VA 23219
Fax: 804.786.4760**

Parent Education Financial Summary

July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	Provider Name	Circuits Served	# Classes Offered	# Participants	Annual Budget	Cost of Space	Cost of Materials	Cost of Instruction	Cost of Administration	Expenses/Class	Total Expenses	Cost Per Participant	Fee Charged	Total Fees Received
2	Alexandria Community Services Board	18	6	7	\$609	\$0	\$27	\$60	\$15	\$102	\$609	\$87	\$0	\$0
3	Alexandria Court Service Unit	18	8	133	\$3,305	\$0	\$39	\$150	\$225	\$413	\$3,305	\$25	\$0	\$0
4	Broadfield-Janus Associates, Inc.	1/2/3/4/7	12	28	\$1,680	\$60	\$25	\$35	\$20	\$140	\$1,680	\$60	\$50	\$1,250
5	Bruder Counseling Center	1/2/3/4	14	154	\$6,076	\$48	\$48	\$275	\$63	\$434	\$6,076	\$39	\$50	\$7,700
6	CAPS of the Blue Ridge, Inc.	22	12	91	\$30,000	\$250	\$167	\$1,250	\$833	\$2,500	\$30,000	\$330	\$35	\$2,900
7	Catholic Charities of Hampton Roads	1/2/3/4	1	6	\$800	\$250	\$400	\$100	\$50	\$800	\$800	\$133	\$40	\$240
8	Center for Promoting Family Learning and Involvement (FLI) (Part of Fairfax County Public Schools)	17/18/19/31	50	698	\$25,000	\$0	\$47	\$145	\$287	\$480	\$23,984	\$34	\$35	\$22,520
9	Central Shenandoah Valley Office on Youth	25	14	146	\$5,000	\$0	\$800	\$300	\$0	\$1,100	\$15,400	\$105	\$30	\$4,110
10	Central Virginia Community College	10/24	24	137	\$1,140	\$0	\$10	\$38	\$0	\$48	\$1,140	\$8	\$0	\$0
11	Chesapeake Volunteers in Youth Services	1	6	32	\$810	\$0	\$10	\$100	\$25	\$135	\$810	\$25	\$50	\$1,500
12	Chesterfield Court Service Unit	12	17	688	\$9,000	\$0	\$357	\$397	\$488	\$1,242	\$21,111	\$31	\$30	\$17,575
13	Children, Youth & Family Services, Inc.	16/24	20	171	\$8,270	\$0	\$39	\$173	\$132	\$345	\$6,890	\$40	\$50	\$4,765
14	Commonwealth Parenting Center	9/12/13/14/16	6	30	\$1,860	\$75	\$10	\$150	\$75	\$310	\$1,860	\$62	\$50	\$1,450
15	Community Mediation Center	26	27	333	\$13,880	\$22	\$61	\$341	\$104	\$528	\$14,260	\$43	\$50	\$13,880
16	Community Mediation Center of Danville-Pittsylvania County	22	36	68	\$12,500	\$25	\$89	\$65	\$65	\$244	\$8,784	\$129	\$30	\$2,065
17	Community Services Board - District 19	6/11/12	23	107	\$13,189	\$288	\$50	\$98	\$90	\$526	\$13,189	\$123	\$25	\$2,685
18	Conflict Resolution Center	23/24/25/27	13	77	\$7,531	\$0	\$28	\$84	\$467	\$579	\$7,531	\$98	\$35	\$2,036
19	Couples & Kids/A Counseling Center for Families	24	23	106	\$7,119	\$16	\$12	\$280	\$17	\$324	\$7,463	\$70	\$20	\$2,010
20	Department of Social Services - Virginia Beach	2	60	400	\$8,730	\$0	\$6	\$140	\$0	\$146	\$8,730	\$22	\$35	\$10,500

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Parent Education Financial Summary

July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	Provider Name	Circuits Served	# Classes Offered	# Participants	Annual Budget	Cost of Space	Cost of Materials	Cost of Instruction	Cost of Administration	Expenses/Class	Total Expenses	Cost Per Participant	Fee Charged	Total Fees Received
21	Dispute Resolution Center	11/12/13/14	24	722	\$20,000	\$100	\$150	\$503	\$100	\$853	\$20,472	\$28	\$0	\$0
22	DSC Community Mediation Center	1/2/3/4/5/7/8	21	271	\$9,287	\$19	\$40	\$171	\$21	\$252	\$5,300	\$20	\$35	\$8,070
23	Fairfax County J&DR Court - Family Systems Counseling & Substance Abuse Assessment	19	5	89	\$3,229	\$0	\$17	\$348	\$282	\$646	\$3,229	\$36	\$0	\$0
24	Family Lifeline (formerly Family and Children's Service)	9/12/13/14	10	50	\$4,200	\$200	\$150	\$270	\$200	\$820	\$8,200	\$164	\$40	\$1,200
25	Family Services of Roanoke Valley	10/11/23	11	145	\$6,300	\$50	\$77	\$343	\$55	\$525	\$5,775	\$40	\$35	\$4,970
26	Family Services of Tidewater, Inc.	1/2/3/4	20	176	\$6,045	\$0	\$50	\$206	\$46	\$302	\$6,045	\$34	\$50	\$8,050
27	Fleet & Family Support Centers of Hampton Roads	1/2/3/4/5/7/8	18	96	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NA	\$0	\$0
28	Frontier Health	30	48	297	\$4,560	\$0	\$10	\$65	\$20	\$95	\$4,560	\$15	\$15	\$4,395
29	Gilbert Mediation Services	7	1	4	\$218	\$5	\$5	\$200	\$8	\$218	\$218	\$55	\$35	\$140
30	Goochland-Powhatan Community Services	16	26	48	\$710	\$0	\$27	\$0	\$0	\$51	\$710	\$15	\$30	\$1,373
31	Gray Ball & Lee Consultants	1/2/4/6/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/19/20/24/31	4	6	\$330	\$15	\$2	\$35	\$21	\$73	\$290	\$48	\$45	\$225
32	Hampton's Healthy Families Partnership	8	22	383	\$8,880	\$0	\$160	\$150	\$60	\$370	\$25,520	\$67	\$25	\$4,900
33	Hanover County Community Services Board	16	34	285	\$23,786	\$0	\$143	\$51	\$47	\$241	\$8,203	\$29	\$45	\$8,504
34	Healthy Living Solutions, Inc.	1/2/3/4	2	5	\$483	\$14	\$2	\$80	\$0	\$96	\$483	\$97	\$50	\$250.00
35	J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College	12/13/14/16	1	7	\$315	\$0	\$35	\$280	\$0	\$315	\$315	\$45	\$45	\$315
36	Jewish Family Service of Tidewater, Inc.	1/2/3/4/5/7/8	16	191	\$6,800	\$16	\$93	\$225	\$310	\$644	\$10,304	\$54	\$50	\$9,140
37	Karen Rice, LCSW	14/15/16	15	107	\$3,275	\$13	\$13	\$180	\$12	\$218	\$3,275	\$31	\$40	\$4,160
38	Lifquest Education	16/20	6	42	\$3,126	\$65	\$56	\$260	\$140	\$521	\$3,126	\$74	\$50	\$1,130

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Parent Education Financial Summary

July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	Provider Name	Circuits Served	# Classes Offered	# Participants	Annual Budget	Cost of Space	Cost of Materials	Cost of Instruction	Cost of Administration	Expenses/Class	Total Expenses	Cost Per Participant	Fee Charged	Total Fees Received
39	Lonesome Pine Office on Youth	30	9	9	\$540	\$0	\$4	\$56	\$0	\$60	\$540	\$60	\$50	\$450
40	Lord Fairfax Community College	15/16/19/20/26/31	7	70	\$2,744	\$42	\$0	\$250	\$100	\$392	\$2,744	\$39	\$49	\$3,367
41	Lutheran Family Services of Virginia, Inc.	24	3	19	\$1,536	\$0	\$67	\$240	\$67	\$373	\$1,120	\$59	\$10	\$200
42	Mediation Center at FOCUS	16	20	235	\$9,100	\$120	\$59	\$181	\$148	\$508	\$10,158	\$43	\$50	\$6,252
43	Mediation Center of Hampton Roads	1/2/3/4/5/7/8	36	300	\$7,000	\$20	\$5	\$100	\$50	\$175	\$6,300	\$21	\$40	\$10,000
44	Mediation Services of Williamsburg	7/9	20	182	\$9,680	\$68	\$46	\$250	\$120	\$484	\$9,680	\$53	\$40	\$5,960
45	Memorial Child Guidance Clinic	12/13/14	12	62	\$10,000	\$217	\$350	\$100	\$167	\$833	\$10,000	\$161	\$0	\$0
46	Mental Health Association of the New River Valley, Inc.	27	20	445	\$17,146	\$0	\$111	\$335	\$412	\$857	\$17,146	\$39	\$50	\$15,867
47	Mountain Empire Community College	29/30	2	9	\$450	\$50	\$75	\$50	\$50	\$225	\$450	\$50	\$25	\$225
48	Nancy Siford, Inc.	10/15	32	300	\$9,000	\$0	\$100	\$160	\$30	\$290	\$9,280	\$31	\$30	\$9,000
49	Northern VA Community College-Annandale Campus	19	0	0	\$920	\$0	\$60	\$200	\$200	\$460	\$0	N/A	\$50	\$0
50	Northern VA Community College-Loudoun Campus	19/20	0	0	\$190	\$30	\$40	\$100	\$20	\$190	\$0	N/A	\$50	\$0
51	Northern VA Community College-Manassas Campus	31	0	0	\$320	\$0	\$0	\$40	\$0	\$160	\$0	N/A	\$50	\$0
52	Northern Virginia Community College - Woodbridge Campus	15/31	1	2	\$318	\$0	\$19	\$172	\$127	\$318	\$318	\$159	\$49	\$98
53	Northern Virginia Family Service	17/18/19/31	41	875	\$29,750	\$0	\$147	\$243	\$374	\$763	\$31,302	\$36	\$35	\$30,450
54	Patrick Henry Community College	21/22	1	2	\$537	\$0	\$337	\$200	\$0	\$537	\$537	\$268	\$50	\$100
55	Paul D. Camp Community College	5	9	102	\$3,015	\$40	\$110	\$125	\$60	\$335	\$3,015	\$30	\$35	\$3,570
56	Peaceful Pathways, Inc.	5/9	34	272	\$8,000	\$4	\$26	\$200	\$20	\$251	\$8,521	\$31	\$40	\$8,730

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Parent Education Financial Summary

July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	Provider Name	Circuits Served	# Classes Offered	# Participants	Annual Budget	Cost of Space	Cost of Materials	Cost of Instruction	Cost of Administration	Expenses/Class	Total Expenses	Cost Per Participant	Fee Charged	Total Fees Received
57	Peacemaker	10/22	31	449	\$4,340	\$50	\$20	\$0	\$0	\$70	\$4,340	\$10	\$35	N/A
58	Peninsula Mediation Center	7/8/9	11	92	\$4,800	\$0	\$50	\$200	\$150	\$400	\$4,400	\$48	\$40	\$4,960
59	Piedmont Community Services - Martinsville & Rocky Mount	21/22	34	438	\$8,840	\$20	\$40	\$150	\$50	\$260	\$8,840	\$20	\$15	\$5,690
60	Prevent Child Abuse Roanoke Valley	23/25	12	100	\$23,000	\$0	\$83	\$50	\$0	\$133	\$1,600	\$16	\$15	\$1,600
61	Prevention Services of Middle Peninsula-Northern Neck Community Services Board	9/15	7	24	\$1,200	\$0	\$67	\$65	\$130	\$262	\$1,834	\$76	\$25	\$600
62	Rappahannock Mediation Center	15/16	20	86	\$3,220	\$0	\$7	\$80	\$0	\$87	\$1,730	\$20	\$50	\$3,220
63	Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services Board	16/20	8	36	\$3,500	\$63	\$188	\$125	\$63	\$438	\$3,500	\$97	\$4	\$1,440
64	Resolution Facilitators	21/23/24/25/27	10	30	\$125	\$0	\$60	\$0	\$25	\$85	\$850	\$28	\$25	\$800
65	Rockbridge Area Community Services Board	25	10	23	\$12,582	\$0	\$58	\$1,000	\$200	\$1,258	\$12,582	\$547	\$50	\$710
66	Safehome Systems, Inc.	25	1	2	\$1,300	\$0	\$20	\$40	\$20	\$80	\$80	\$40	\$40	\$80
67	Southside Mediation Center	10/11	3	12	\$690	\$0	\$30	\$200	\$0	\$230	\$690	\$58	\$35	\$420
68	Southside Virginia Community College	6/10/11	6	37	\$3,933	\$320	\$62	\$140	\$134	\$656	\$3,933	\$106	\$40	\$1,480
69	Synergy Group, Ltd.	11/12/13/14/15/16	1	90	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$56	\$0	\$0
70	Thad Robbins	9/11/13/14	2	2	\$84	\$0	\$6	\$36	\$0	\$40	\$84	\$42	\$35	\$70
71	The Counseling Center	29	11	44	\$5,000	\$191	\$65	\$44	\$109	\$409	\$5,000	\$114	\$50	\$2,200
72	The Families in Transition Support Foundation	20	50	607	\$30,525	\$135	\$78	\$248	\$150	\$611	\$30,525	\$50	\$50	\$29,800
73	Thomas Nelson Community College	8/9	7	23	\$920	\$0	\$33	\$138	\$100	\$271	\$1,894	\$82	\$40	\$920
74	Virginia Cooperative Extension (Culpeper)	16/20	11	132	\$20,303	\$270	\$196	\$470	\$372	\$1,846	\$20,303	\$154	\$35	\$4,543
75	Virginia Cooperative Extension (Eastville)	2	8	12	\$2,754	\$71	\$23	\$235	\$15	\$344	\$2,754	\$230	\$35	\$420

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Parent Education Financial Summary

July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	Provider Name	Circuits Served	# Classes Offered	# Participants	Annual Budget	Cost of Space	Cost of Materials	Cost of Instruction	Cost of Administration	Expenses/Class	Total Expenses	Cost Per Participant	Fee Charged	Total Fees Received
76	Virginia Cooperative Extension (King and Queen)	9/15	14	140	\$8,907	\$131	\$198	\$266	\$41	\$636	\$8,907	\$64	\$35	\$4,830
77	Virginia Cooperative Extension (Lebanon)	29/30	14	79	\$10,800	\$159	\$112	\$439	\$61	\$771	\$10,800	\$137	\$35	\$2,485
78	Virginia Cooperative Extension (Lexington)	25/26	1	5	\$871	\$180	\$175	\$501	\$15	\$871	\$871	\$174	\$35	\$175
79	Virginia Cooperative Extension (Louisa)	16/24	17	89	\$13,026	\$160	\$250	\$329	\$37	\$767	\$13,036	\$146	\$35	\$3,115
80	Virginia Cooperative Extension (Manassas)	15/17/18/19/20/31	14	217	\$35,212	\$552	\$216	\$705	\$1,032	\$2,515	\$35,212	\$162	\$35	\$6,010
81	Virginia Cooperative Extension (New Castle)	23/25	48	288	\$21,848	\$94	\$61	\$235	\$65	\$455	\$21,848	\$76	\$35	\$2,947
82	Virginia Cooperative Extension (Stuart)	21/27	17	81	\$17,043	\$207	\$76	\$313	\$406	\$1,003	\$17,043	\$210	\$35	\$1,385
83	Virginia Cooperative Extension (Suffolk)	5	10	82	\$10,303	\$216	\$181	\$546	\$87	\$1,030	\$10,303	\$126	\$35	\$2,730
84	Virginia Cooperative Extension (Wytheville)	27/28/29	22	120	\$11,823	\$111	\$97	\$282	\$48	\$537	\$11,823	\$99	\$35	\$3,850
85	Virginia Highlands Community College - Center for Business & Industry	28	20	293	\$9,360	\$50	\$220	\$143	\$55	\$468	\$9,360	\$32	\$40	\$11,720
86	Winchester Exchange Child-Parent Center	26	27	226	\$11,035	\$33	\$52	\$61	\$237	\$382	\$10,313	\$46	\$50	\$10,800
87	Wytheville Community College	27/28	12	230	\$7,980	\$100	\$180	\$175	\$210	\$665	\$7,980	\$35	\$35	\$7,980
88	COLUMN TOTALS		1,362	13,309	\$658,614	\$5,236	\$12,712	\$17,765	\$10,033	\$46,426	\$658,195			\$365,007
89	COLUMN AVERAGES		16	155	\$7,748	\$62	\$150	\$209	\$118	\$546	\$7,743	\$79	\$35	\$4,345

Note: N/A indicates that this information is not available for reporting purposes

APPENDIX I

Summary of Responses to Parent Education Judges' Survey

138 (53%) of the J&DR and Circuit Court Judges Responded

1. This court refers parents to parent education classes in the following case types:

42	30%	all cases involving visitation, custody, separation/divorce
92	67%	only contested cases involving visitation, custody, separation/divorce
		other (See responses on Page I-2.)

2. The impact since this mandate became effective, July 1, 2001, includes: (check all with which you agree)

37	27%	reduced litigation
30	22%	reduced re-litigation
39	28%	increase in mediated agreements
17	12%	additional burdensome paperwork
16	12%	additional questions from disputants related to classes
50	36%	no noticeable effects
46	33%	parents are more focused on child(ren)'s needs
39	28%	less parental hostility in court
30	22%	more clerk time due to questions/paperwork
31	22%	additional oversight responsibility
		other (See responses on Page I-3.)

3. What are the benefits?

122	88%	value to children/parents
58	42%	it benefits the court
		other (See responses on Page I-5.)

4. If not referring, why?

6	4%	lack of classes available in area
2	1%	classes not available in a timely manner
1	1%	not of value to children/parents
3	2%	parties' inability to pay
1	1%	lack of child care
3	2%	lack of transportation
1	1%	question the appropriateness of the requirement to attend
		other (See responses on Page I-6.)

5. The parent education mandate should:

93	67%	continue as it currently exists
21	15%	continue with modifications
22	16%	not continue

6. Suggestions for revisions/modification of the parent education mandate include:
(See responses on Page I-7.)

Parent Education Judges' Survey

Responses to Question #1

The figures preceding each response indicate the number of judges who chose that response to the question.

1. This court refers parents to parent education classes in the following case types:

42 all cases involving visitation, custody, separation/divorce

92 only contested cases involving visitation, custody, separation/divorce

In the "Other" category, the following descriptions were entered:

Also for equitable distribution.

Been remiss in the past, but have begun using "Children in the Middle".

On joint request only.

Contested cases where the parties/counsel are not adamantly opposed.

Where requested and appropriate.

Many cases involving visitation, custody, separation/divorce.

Cases where problems exist unless lawyers request in cases involving visitation and custody.

Responses to Question #2

The figures preceding each response indicate the number of judges who chose that response to the question.

2. The impact since this mandate became effective, July 1, 2001, includes:

- 37 reduced litigation
- 30 reduced re-litigation
- 39 increase in mediated agreements
- 17 additional burdensome paperwork
- 16 additional questions from disputants related to classes
- 50 no noticeable effects
- 46 parents are more focused on child(ren)'s needs
- 39 less parental hostility in court
- 30 more clerk time due to questions/paperwork
- 31 additional oversight responsibility

In the "Other" category, the following descriptions were entered:

Very few of these cases come up.

Unable to answer as to impact.

Most feedback positive.

Hard to chart impact in a scientific way.

Reduction of judicial discretion.

Program has great potential. Too soon to give any definitive answers, but thus far response has been favorable and results mixed.

Too early to tell.

Need to continue education further.

We were doing this before mandate.

Cases "agreed" earlier in the process.

Having been doing this for five years so nothing has changed.

Additional hearings on "show cause" for failure to abide by court order.

Have been doing this for years.

No impact.

Parents generally do not go.

Responses to Question #2

Too early to make any conclusion.

I don't have any way to measure these. I think it should be helping with unnecessary litigation and hostility, and plenty of people can't be hurt by doing this even if we can't measure it.

Parents have a greater awareness of how their actions may affect the children.

Responses to Question #3

The figures preceding each response indicate the number of judges who chose that response to the question.

3. What are the benefits?

122 value to children/parents

58 it benefits the court

In the "Other" category, the following descriptions were entered:

No noticeable effects.

None. They keep coming back and filing papers.

Limited at best, probably statistically insignificant.

Too early to tell how it benefits parents & child. It is "seed planting". Sometimes it is years before any results are seen.

Helps attorneys deal with clients.

No advantage over prior procedure whereby judges were referring cases they deemed appropriate.

Shows court parent takes responsibility seriously.

Don't know yet.

None.

Has served to weed out some of the nuisance or harrassment type custody petitions as it is too much effort for that type of petitioner.

None.

Costs far outweigh benefits.

Yet to be determined.

None.

Unsure.

The detriments overall (time and money to litigate) outweigh the benefits.

Responses to Question #4

The figures preceding each response indicate the number of judges who chose that response to the question.

4. If not referring, why?

- 6 lack of classes available in area
- 2 classes not available in a timely manner
- 1 not of value to children/parents
- 3 parties' inability to pay
- 1 lack of child care
- 3 lack of transportation
- 1 question the appropriateness of the requirement to attend

In the "Other" category, the following descriptions were entered:

Seldom comes into play.

Most cases settle and parties allege visitation/custody is "not contested".

Sometimes neither lawyer nor judge refers.

Unusual circumstance - been through class before.

Latinos need a special class.

Opposition from counsel and parties. In addition, in almost all cases, mediation/education/counseling has already been tried without success.

I refer such matters to mediation (Mrs. McCue) which is most helpful. We do not seem to use anything much other than mediation.

Lack of available classes where parents live out of town.

See above - detriments outweigh benefits.

Responses to Questions #5 and #6

The figures preceding each response indicate the number of judges who chose that response to the question.

5. The parent education mandate should:

93 continue as it currently exists

21 continue with modifications

22 not continue

6. Suggestions for revisions/modification of the parent education mandate include:

This is an exceptional program which is cost effective. The number of cases resolved short of litigation is 75%. If the case is not resolved, at least issues are narrowed and focused.

Give courts the discretion that they are due.

Make it discretionary as before.

Lots of difficult enforcement issues - one parent won't go and wants to hold up the divorce. Do we issue a rule? Delay divorce? Clarify that we retain the right in all cases to require this mandate.

Advised that four people showed up for mediation at our mediation meeting place and were turned away because the mediator advised he would not hold a class for four people.

Classes should not require fees.

More funding for even greater efforts in this area.

Keep us updated on available classes.

Be funded by state to expand in depth, with parents paying according to ability. Most parents I see are at "minimum wage" level.

Encourage more classes and mandate small fee in indigent cases.

Ourt circuit has been ordering this for years, before mandate. We've found it very beneficial.

Do not mandate. Allow discretion without having to justify with additional paperwork for overburdened and understaffed clerk's staff.

Courts to use discretion when not appropriate.

Should be judicial discretion based upon the circumstances of each case. Problem with providing classes - classes offered only quarterly due to funding. Therefore, more funding is needed so that classes could be offered monthly.

Responses to Questions #5 and #6

The course of study should conclude with a mandatory settlement conference.

Specify at what point in the litigation process must the referral be made; i.e., at time of filing suit or before pendente lite hearing or prior to final hearing, etc.

Most people are going to the one-day class. Prior, we had two Saturday class and I felt the quality was better with that class.

A course is helpful to some parties and referral would be best left to the judge rather than mandated by statute. Also a burden to access to courts.

At courts discretion.

Give court discretion as to who to send. Monitor system needs to be established to assure quality of presentations by service provider.

Program should be discretionary to permit court to require parties to participate if appropriate.

Agreement by the parties to attend.

Mediation and education/counseling should always be available for those cases where the parties will willingly participate. It will not work where it is imposed.

Making it optional, to be utilized at court's discretion.

I wish we would formalize the relationship between mediation and parenting classes.

Only order parenting education if the parties are unable to mediate. We should not have to order parenting at first appearance and before parties have had a chance to mediate.

Detriment - delay of process to allow for completion of class.

Needs to be some sanction if the parent does not attend. Presently no provision in the law for this so if the parent does not attend before trial, we still go ahead with trial.

The program should be required within a reasonable period. Exit surveys of parents have shown early involvement to be the number 1 issue with respect to best interests.

Eliminate the mandatory aspect.

Leave it up to the court.

Make optional for judicial determination in each case.

I don't know if it should continue or not. It would be better to ask this question of lawyers handling domestic relations cases. They are in a better position to report the benefits or lack thereof of this program.